

LINCOLNVILLE NEWS

SPRING 2015 | ISSUE 1

Keeping you informed of what's happening in St. Augustine's historic Lincolnville.

FIX-IT-UP PROGRAM LAUNCHES IN LINCOLNVILLE

Less than a year after it was launched, the Lincolnville Community redevelopment Agency's (LCRA) first major initiative is already paying dividends in the community. Called Fix-It-Up the grant program helps homeowners make needed improvements on their homes.

Earlier this spring, 64-year-old Lincolnville resident Willie Brown was the grant program's first recipient when repairs were made to his Twine Street house. Fix-It-Up provides up to \$7,000 to homeowners who qualify for emergency repairs services for sub-standard housing. The program is administered by the St. Johns Housing Partnership, which handles eligibility reviews and construction services.

"I'm excited to see fix-it-up already in place. The steering committee was eager to allocate funds from the first year's budget to put back into Lincolnville in a meaningful way. Joining with the St. Johns County Housing Partnership to implement Fix-It-Up made sense on so many levels. We could learn from SJHP's experience, rely on their expertise and when possible leverage funds from the program's modest grants to make fast, tangible improvements in the quality of life for Lincolnville residents while also helping to preserve the existing housing inventory" said Theresa Segal, Lincolnville CRA Steering Committee Chair.

The Lincolnville CRA decided in 2014 to make the Fix-It-Up program its first major initiative. The CRA was established by the City of St. Augustine to address conditions of economic distress in Lincolnville. The agency uses tax revenues from increases in property values to tackle community improvement projects that were outlined in its approved plan.



Lincolnville resident Willie Brown and St. John's Housing Partnership Construction Project Manager Susan Giddens, in front of Mr. Brown's Twine Street home that benefited from the area's new Fix-It-Up repair grant program.

The CRA's Steering committee chose to partner with the Housing Partnership because of the strong record of helping homeowners in the community. The St. Johns County non-profit works to make housing more affordable for citizens in need. The organization partners with other private and corporate donors, government entities and various foundations to expand its service offerings and reach a wider geographical area.

Through those partnerships the organization is able to leverage additional funds from other programs, meaning it can often do additional repairs beyond the available Fix-It-Up funds.

For Brown, a veteran who sustained injuries during his military career in Germany, the Fix-It-Up grant with the installation of a new roof. Lazar said thanks to the Affordable Housing Program for veterans,

Brown also qualified for energy conservation and accessibility improvements. That helped replace flooring, cabinets, plumbing fixtures and exterior doors.

Lincolnville residents can apply for the Fix-It-Up program through the St. Johns Housing Partnership, which evaluates applications and inspects the home. The organization prioritizes the repairs needed and performs the work as an independent contractor. Of the \$75,000 dedicated in this year's budget for the Fix-It-Up Program, \$40,600 has already been allocated.

For information call St. Johns Housing Partnership at (904) 824-0902.

To learn more about the Fix-It-Up Program, turn to the back page.

NEWS AND NOTES

LEGAL ASSISTANCE FOR TITLE CLEARING

One problem that affects some of our Lincolnville residents is related to the ownership of their property. Many of our residents are descendants from families that have lived in Lincolnville for generations. The problem for them is that they don't appear on the legal title to the property. This can occur for several reasons, but it can be fixed. St. Johns County Legal Aid is committed to helping our residents that cannot afford traditional legal services. They are willing to help residents with clouded titles so that they can be recognized as legal owners of the property they've lived in for decades. If you or someone you know needs legal assistance, go to Legal Aid between 8:30am-5:00pm Monday through Friday and complete an application for assistance. No need to call for an appointment--just go in and complete an application.

By Clyde Taylor of Taylor & Taylor P.A.

Location and Contact Information:

St. Johns County Legal Aid
222 San Marco Ave., Ste. A
(904) 827-9921

If there is a genuine need for assistance in reaching the office, contact the number above and they will assist in making arrangements with Sunshine bus or in extreme cases make a home visit.

BUSINESSES IN LINCOLNVILLE



Terry Gamble and Jeff Sapp, owners of the new Blue Hen restaurant at 117 Martin Luther King Avenue.



Nyk-ol Smith and brother, Tony Smith, owners of the Corner Market and Tony's Barber Shop at 97 Martin Luther King Avenue.

LINCOLNVILLE CRA SURVEY

The LCRA Steering committee has attached a survey regarding a possible overlay district. Please take a few moments of your time to fill it out and return it to the City of St. Augustine, LCRA, P.O. Box 210, St. Augustine, FL 32085 Or bring it to one of the LCRA meetings at the Galimore Center.

The deadline for submission is June 9th

Welcome

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At our first meeting in April of last year the Committee had a long discussion about the need for preserving Lincolnville's "character" as we pursue the Plan's goals. We all agreed that African-American heritage and the inventory of historic houses play a key role in defining the neighborhood, but there is also a certain wonderful sense of community that is uniquely Lincolnville.

Residents sit on their porches, greet each other in passing and gather at the numerous churches. Lincolnville has more organizations than you can count, yet there is a sense of live and let live. We concluded that the people of Lincolnville are just as important as its architecture and history. Every decision we make as a committee needs to keep the preservation of Lincolnville's character in mind. I have read and reread the LCRA's Redevelopment Plan. I hope you will read it at least once.

You can find it on the COSA website under "Your Government", "City Boards", and then "Lincolnville Community Redevelopment Area Steering Committee". It's a good plan that has a lot of potential, but it is only words on paper until it is put into action. Resident participation is essential to shaping Lincolnville's future. Please join us in this process

Sincerely,
Theresa Segal

Other Lincolnville CRA Information

CRA STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Theresa Segal, Chair
Laura Stevenson Dumas, Vice-Chair
Tony Smith
Clyde Taylor
Brian Thompson

MEETINGS

Meetings are open to the public and take place on the second Tuesday of every month at 7pm at the Willie Galimore Center, 399 Riberia Street

CONTACT US

To contact the Lincolnville CRA, please call 904-209-4325 or email Sharon O'Keefe at sokeefe@citystaug.com

City of St. Augustine
Lincolnvill Community Redevelopment Agency

FIX-IT-UP GRANT PROGRAM

The City of St. Augustine Community Redevelopment Agency has designated a new grant program to help residents in the Lincolnvill Area with essential home repairs. The Fix-it-up grant will provide up to \$7,000 to homeowners that qualify for emergency repair services for sub-standard housing. The program is funded by the CRA for eligible households. Eligibility review and construction services are provided by the St. Johns County Housing Partnership, Inc.

GRANT BASICS

The Fix-It-Up Grant Program is awarded in amounts of up to \$7,000 per home. The home must be within the boundaries of the Lincolnvill CRA. Applicants will have to meet all eligibility requirements administered by St. Johns Housing Partnership, Inc. Available funds will be prioritized for life and safety essential repairs.

APPLICANTS MUST BE APPROVED BY THE CITY BEFORE ANY PROJECT IS STARTED.

St. Johns Housing Partnership, Inc. will evaluate the application after inspection of the home, prioritize the repairs needed and perform the work as an independent contractor. Existing materials will be replaced with the materials to preserve the architectural integrity of the structure whenever possible.

For application information, call St. Johns Housing Partnership at (904) 824-0902



City of St. Augustine
P.O. Box 210
St. Augustine, FL 32085-0210

